DRAFT Outline for MLA Statistics Workshop

I. **Introductions**
II. **Why stats? What can you use them for? How often should you look at and record?**
    a. **How do you know you've met your goals?**
    b. **Show value of library to a variety of people (including govt. officials)**
    c. **Helpful for grant writing**
    d. **Can be used to set goals**
    e. **How often should you evaluate and record?**
        i. **That depends. Monthly is ideal for circulation and cataloging statistics. An annual review of the public library statistics is an excellent idea**
        ii. **If your library is not automated, consider collecting certain statistics twice a year. For example if you want to know how many reference questions staff answers in a day, pick two weeks during a slow time and a busy time and have staff record this date. You can then average the date for an approximation.**
III. **Relational databases and how to structure the database for easy retrieval of statistics**
    a. **Relational databases use tables to establish connections between data**
    b. **Data Structuring tips**
        i. **Figure out what you want/need to collect**
        ii. **Use automation system to design easy retrieval of that data**
            1. **Example: using item types or categories for juvenile and adult to obtain data for public library report**
        iii. **If not automated, consider cataloging the physical items based upon the statistics you need to collect.**
IV. **How to evaluate and effectively utilize statistics?**
    a. **Review your stats monthly or annually. Staff and the board should be involved in the process.**
    b. **Look for trends; compare stats from one year (or one month) to the next**
    c. **Ask questions**
        i. **Is there a trend where some months are busier than others?**
        ii. **How does usage look from year to year?**
        iii. **Did our circulation go down or up?**
    d. **Reflect on statistics**
        i. **If circulation went down, why did it go down? What can we do differently?**
    e. **Set goals for next year**
        i. **If you would like circulation to increase, by how much? Based on your reflections, what types of things should we do?**